

THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

141

vocal organs are cases of individual contribution to the development of language. The baby words and individual mispronunciations which are taken up by a family and its friends, but never get further, show us how dialects grow. There are changes in language which are, "in their inception, inaccuracies of speech. They attest the influence of that immense numerical majority among the speakers of English who do not take sufficient pains to speak correctly, but whose blunders become finally the norm of the language." ¹ In analogy things which are alike are embraced in a single term; in metaphor two or more things which seem alike, but may not be so, are grouped together and are embraced in a single term. All these modes of change in language attest the work of individuals on language. Sometimes there is extension of influence to a group. Sometimes the influence is only temporary and is rejected again. Sometimes it falls in with a drift of taste or habit, when it is taken up and colors the pronunciation or usage of the population of a great district, and becomes fixed in the language. All this is true also on the negative side, since usage of words, accent, timbre of the voice, and pronunciation (drawing, nasal tones) expel older usages. Language therefore illustrates well all the great changes of folkways under the heads of cooperation and antagonism. We have an excellent chance to study the operation in the case of slang. A people who are prosperous and happy, optimistic and progressive, will produce much slang. It is a case of play. They amuse themselves with the language. We may think the new words and phrases vulgar

and in bad
taste, or senseless and ridiculous. We may reject
them, but the
masses will decide whether they shall be
permanently rejected or
not. The vote is informal. The most confirmed
purist will
by and by utter a new slang word when he needs
it. One's
objections are broken down. One's taste is spoiled
by what he
hears. We are right in the midst of the operation
of making
folkways and can perceive it close at hand.

142. Money. Money is another primitive
device which is
produced in the folkways. Money was not called
into existence

¹ Whitney, *Language* ^ 28.